

## THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

**Title of meeting:** Climate Change & the Green Recovery Portfolio Decision Meeting

**Subject:** Greening Strategy - Future Review and Delivery

**Date of meeting:** 9 February 2022

**Report by:** Bethan Mose, Public Health Principal - Wider Determinants

**Wards affected:** All

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1. **Requested by** Director of Public Health.

### 2. Purpose

To make the Cabinet Member aware of:

- A proposed Greening Strategy refresh in 2022; and
- The need to identify permanent funding to resource and deliver the Greening Strategy, and enable the City Council to meet its statutory and legal obligations.

### 3. Information Requested

- 3.1 The Greening Portsmouth Strategy document was considered and adopted by Cabinet in March 2020<sup>1</sup> and supports other programmes of work in the city, including the Climate Action Plan, Clean Air Zone, Air Quality Strategy, Local Transport Plan 4, emerging Local Plan and the Portsmouth Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 3.2 It sets a clear ambition to increase the amount of green infrastructure, tree canopy cover and the number of planting opportunities contributing to the Portsmouth City Council objective to be carbon neutral by 2030. Emphasis is placed on increasing tree canopy cover whilst also recognising the importance of other forms of greening, advocating a mix of greening schemes appropriate to the urban environment.
- 3.3 The City Council (PCC) recognises the need to accelerate the planting of trees in the city, as well as enhancing lower-level planting (hedges and shrubbery) and creating green walls or green roofs. To double canopy coverage in the city, we need to add 360 new trees in parks and open spaces, and 120 new street trees (in addition to replacements) every year for the next 25 years.
- 3.4 Since its adoption, resource has been allocated to focus on the delivery of the Strategy through the Public Health Transformation Fund. The early part of 2021 saw

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<sup>1</sup> Item 8, [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 10th March, 2020, 12.00 pm Portsmouth City Council](#)

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the appointment of a new Green and Healthy City Co-ordinator; a fixed-term role to oversee delivery of specific projects, liaise between services delivering greening as part of their core functions, act as a point of contact for collaboration and lead bids for external funding. The role sits in the Public Health team to ensure strong alignment with health and wellbeing priorities, particularly health inequalities.

- 3.5 The Green and Healthy City Coordinator role is pivotal in supporting this through coordination and oversight at the strategic level of all the greening activities being delivered by multiple PCC services. The role also offers the capacity for PCC to
- seek and deliver external funding opportunities
  - monitor and evaluate greening schemes, and
  - ensuring an established PCC point of contact for greening.
- 3.6 The role has already proved invaluable with regards to liaising with voluntary groups and grassroot activities for community greening, whilst also successfully bidding for Trees for Cities funding which is now being delivered as a collective effort across several PCC teams. The wider progress made since appointment was clearly articulated in the Strategy update to Cabinet<sup>2</sup> in October 2021.
- 3.7 A detailed work programme for the next 6-12 months is in place for the Green and Healthy City Coordinator, and included in Appendix A. This includes:
- developing a broader understanding and evidence base for greening to tackle health inequalities and improve health outcomes
  - continuing to look for external funding opportunities
  - strengthening the communications plan and commence publicity, timed to coincide with planting regimes and seasonal maintenance
  - developing Guiding Principles for greening the City and a step-by-step guide for community groups to use when seeking approval and funding to undertake greening on PCC-owned land.
  - Updating the Tree Charter and working towards [Tree Cities of the World](#)
  - Mapping of all new green infrastructure 2019 onwards and explore development of an interactive online asset map,
- 3.8 As we approach the two-year anniversary of the adoption of the Greening Strategy, it is sensible to take stock and review against a changing policy landscape at both the national and local level, to ensure it aligns with policy developments since its adoption in 2020. In particular, the Strategy needs to be cognisant of:
- Environment Act 2021<sup>3</sup>, the emerging provisions of which are summarised in Appendix B.
  - Portsmouth Local Plan<sup>4</sup>, which set out in its Autumn 2021 Regulation 18 consultation a clear policy direction for greening and health.

<sup>2</sup> Item 8 [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 5th October, 2021, 11.00 am Portsmouth City Council](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Environment Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Portsmouth Local Plan 2038](#)

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- Portsmouth Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-30<sup>5</sup>, currently under review and public consultation.
- 3.9 The capacity currently exists to refresh the Greening Strategy if it is scoped and undertaken by the Green and Healthy City Co-ordinator, with support from the established cross-directorate PCC Virtual Green Team.
- 3.10 Delivering the Greening Strategy, and the nature of greening itself, operates on multiple time scales. Whilst the workstream is gathering momentum and delivering excellent opportunities on the ground, the Coordinator role is fixed-term to 2023; the Public Health Transformation Fund is a time-limited resource, with no further funds available. In recognition of the cross-cutting, corporate nature of the role and agenda, future funding needs to be identified.
- 3.11 The Cabinet Member is invited to consider and advise on the following:
- i. A refresh of the Greening Strategy to be undertaken in 2022; and
  - ii. Exploring options for a permanent coordinator resource - funded corporately - in order to secure longer term delivery of the Greening Strategy and enable the City Council to meet its statutory and legal obligations.

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Signed by Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health

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<sup>5</sup> [Health and Wellbeing Strategy \(portsmouth.gov.uk\)](https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk)

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**Appendices:**

Appendix A: Work Programme

Appendix B: Environment Act 2021

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>
Portsmouth Greening Strategy 2020	<a href="#">Greening Portsmouth Strategy appendix.pdf</a>
Environment Act 2021	<a href="#">Environment Act 2021 (legislation.gov.uk)</a>
Portsmouth Local Plan Reg 18	<a href="#">Portsmouth Local Plan 2038</a>
Portsmouth Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-30	<a href="#">Health and Wellbeing Strategy (portsmouth.gov.uk)</a>

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**APPENDIX A: WORK PROGRAMME**

Greening Portsmouth Strategy Theme				Comms Plan & Funding Opportunities
Greening the Public Realm	Greening Private Space	Grassroots Engagement	Policy Approach	
<p>Partnership working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilder Portsmouth through HIOW Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• Supporting HIOW Wildlife Trust and UoP application for built environment research fellowship funding for creative greening in the city centre.</li> <li>• Woodland Trust providing advice and support; particular interest in working with planning on National Model Design Code pilot.</li> <li>• Tree Council - Community Orchards, Pocket Parks and community engagement for tree planting</li> <li>• Climate Action Board, supporting community interest through wasted space campaign and signposting for project development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape Architects setting up meeting with Head of major tree planting projects to link with Network Rail £1million tree fund for 2022</li> </ul>	<p>Urban Tree Challenge Fund - this is a capital bid for £83,000 to plant trees near schools and healthcare centres and in areas with fewer trees and higher social deprivation. Outcome due September 2021; if successful, will support areas to improve health and wellbeing and help connect people to the outdoors.</p>	<p>Greening and Health Literature Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to support emerging Health and Wellbeing Strategy; and</li> <li>- to provide stronger business case for future projects and funding bids</li> </ul> <p>Greening and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (TBC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- informed by above and previous work undertaken by planning</li> <li>- supports objectives of emerging Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>- supports objectives and provides evidence base for Local Plan</li> </ul>	<p>Develop robust Comms Plan and online presence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further House Talk article planned - aimed at PCC employees to share their greening and gardening at home.</li> <li>- #GreeningPortsmouth</li> <li>- Next In The Know - promote tips webpage and share some of the photographs of people's gardens (and then encourage more)</li> </ul> <p>PCC social media focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rewilding, biodiversity and pollination</li> <li>- Sharing projects and successes</li> <li>- Providing advice and support from Wilder Portsmouth campaign</li> </ul>

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Greening the Public Realm	Greening Portsmouth Strategy Theme			Comms Plan & Funding Opportunities
	Greening Private Space	Grassroots Engagement	Policy Approach	
South East Hampshire Rapid Transit - working with Transport to identify greening opportunities within the 9 SEHRT schemes across the city.	QA Hospital Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biodiversity and Greening Strategy and associated projects - PCC support led by Landscape Architects</li> </ul>	Develop a step-by-step guide for community groups to use when seeking approval and funding to undertake greening on PCC-owned land.	Local Plan Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuing to link into the emerging Local Plan and relevant policy making</li> <li>- Linking to PCC's Local Design Code as part of the national pilot programme.</li> </ul>	Other funding opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)</li> <li>- DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food &amp; Rural Affairs)</li> <li>- Forestry Commission</li> <li>- Network rail tree fund</li> <li>- Trees for Cities – (National Lottery and DEFRA)</li> <li>- Local Authority treescape fund</li> </ul>
Church Street & Southampton Road	Proposals for St James's hospital site - 100 trees and wilding areas - support to Solent NHS with advice and design for green infrastructure of their site. Links to wider development proposals for St James's which also have a strong focus on greening.		Regen, Development, Housing, Estate Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tipner/Lennox Point design and masterplanning</li> <li>- Horatia and Leamington design and masterplanning</li> <li>- Buckland Environmental Improvements</li> </ul>	Explore a return to the Portsmouth in Bloom competition.
Parks & Open Spaces and Estate Services supporting biodiversity and rewilding initiatives by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- protecting and enhancing biodiversity</li> </ul>			Update Tree Charter and work towards Tree Cities of the World: <a href="#">About - Tree Cities of the World</a>	

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<b>Greening Portsmouth Strategy Theme</b>				
<b>Greening the Public Realm</b>	<b>Greening Private Space</b>	<b>Grassroots Engagement</b>	<b>Policy Approach</b>	<b>Comms Plan &amp; Funding Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- specific management plans</li> <li>- designation of areas subject to differing maintenance regimes</li> </ul> <p>Trialling areas that will be left to naturalise or where regular mowing is relaxed.</p>				
<p>Superzone pilot - place based approach to tackle the environmental drivers of obesity, bringing together work across PCC services into four multidisciplinary workstreams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active places</li> <li>- Healthy food environment</li> <li>- Cleaner air</li> <li>- Community safety</li> </ul> <p>Greening options being explored as part of cleaner air and community safety workstreams.</p>			<p>Explore links with PCC's Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy for outdoor opportunities.</p>	

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### **APPENDIX B: Environment Act 2021**

Legislation that will protect and enhance our environment for future generations has now passed into UK law.

Through the Act, Government sets an ambition to clean up the country's air, restore natural habitats, increase biodiversity, reduce waste and make better use of our resources. It will halt the decline in species by 2030, require new developments to improve or create habitats for nature, and tackle deforestation overseas.

The inclusion of a legally-binding 2030 species abundance target has the potential to boost efforts to reverse the decline in wildlife and will put the UK on the path towards protecting 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030. The new requirement for planning applications to provide Biodiversity Net Gain will encourage developers to put nature at the heart of their work, whilst Local Nature Recovery Strategies will create the framework for a national system of interconnected sites for nature.

These changes will be driven by new legally binding environmental targets, and enforced by a new, independent Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) which will hold government and public bodies to account on their environmental obligations.

### **Further information**

The Environment Act sets out to deliver:

- Long-term targets to improve air quality, biodiversity, water, and waste reduction and resource efficiency
- A target on ambient PM<sup>2.5</sup> concentrations, the most harmful pollutant to human health
- A target to halt the decline of nature by 2030
- Environmental Improvement Plans, including interim targets
- A cycle of environmental monitoring and reporting
- Environmental Principles embedded in domestic policy making
- Office for Environmental Protection to uphold environmental law

It is not yet clear what the new duties will look like nor what financial implications might be where Local Authorities are required to implement.